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Hood Canal Coordinating Council A Vision for Hood Canal: Hood Canal Integrated Watershed Plan

Public Involvement Strategy v01-20-2010

Background

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) is developing an integrated watershed plan for Hood Canal. The purpose for the integrated watershed plan is to provide a comprehensive, coordinated strategy for protecting and restoring the Hood Canal watershed. The Hood Canal integrated watershed plan is designed to address the HCCC's strategic objectives as described in the HCCC's *Strategic Plan* and to implement the Puget Sound Partnership's *Puget Sound Action Agenda* for the Hood Canal watershed. The framework for the integrated plan is an organizational concept for integrating existing plans and programs to protect and restore the Hood Canal watershed and will include the following elements:

- A **public involvement strategy** that harnesses the knowledge and potential of the general public to shape and implement the Integrated Watershed Management Plan.
- An **inventory** of existing plans and programs, yielding a shared vision and a priority set of targets to focus conservation and restoration actions.
- A **watershed assessment** that analyzes key ecological attributes of, threats to and viability of priority targets; develops result chains or logic models for priority targets and strategies; develops biological and socioeconomic objectives for those strategies; develops indicators for measuring progress; finalizes the desired future conditions; and develops the adaptive management plan.
- A **management plan** will be compiled from the work described above to operationalize public involvement, corrective actions, decision-making, monitoring, and funding.

Purpose/Goal

The goal of this Public Involvement Plan is to conduct a Hood Canal watershed wide public outreach effort that will lead to citizen's being engaged and involved in development of the integrated plan and implementation of subsequent actions. Through this effort it is hoped to capture and strengthen the voice of Hood Canal's citizens.

Framework

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council Board Members, including Kitsap, Mason and Jefferson County Boards of Commissioners and the two Tribes, Skokomish Nation and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, will engage as a regional governance body representing

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and advocating for the Hood Canal watershed and action area. HCCC will be positioned to provide for a coordinated response amongst all Hood Canal interests in support and implementation of the HCCC mission:

“The Hood Canal Coordinating Council, working with partners, community groups and citizens, will advocate for and implement regionally and locally appropriate actions to protect and enhance Hood Canal’s environmental and economic health.”

The HCCC is working with partners through programs and projects that address salmon recovery, low dissolved oxygen and other natural resource issues in the Hood Canal watershed. This Public Involvement Strategy will be the primary communication and interaction tool and will incorporate these issues. The strategy will be incorporated into the overall integrated watershed management plan.

Outreach Strategy

Approach

To help in the determining the best method of outreach and education, HCCC has defined and categorized “the public” in levels of awareness where;

- level 1 are the local and state elected officials that have been major contributors in the initiation and development process,
- level 2 are local environmental project partners that play a major role in the watershed protection and restoration,
- level 3 are community service groups and clubs that represent participants in the social and economic well being of our communities, and
- level 4 are individual citizens in *neighborsheds* who are landowners that will have a voice in the process.

The HCCC has started and will continue to communicate with levels 1 and 2 as the HCCC board of directors, ex-officios and project partners. The HCCC would continue to encourage others to communicate with these level 1 and 2 groups as well.

As for levels 3 and 4, the HCCC wants to coordinate and collaborate with, as well as support organizations that have community connections and volunteer capacity to implement the plan. HCCC will develop a set of scopes of work with partners to define a comprehensive approach for this public involvement strategy, including all of the diverse geographic areas and communities in the Hood Canal area. This partnership will provide a two way information portal to ensure that public input is brought into each of the following three phases in a timely manner. One intent of the strategy is develop a mechanism that will allow funding and supportive resources for the Hood Canal education and outreach community to build capacity. HCCC will work with the Puget Sound Partnership, Hood Canal Watershed Education Network (HCWEN), and the

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ECO-Net¹ partners to develop the capacity necessary to address pertinent education and outreach needs.

In consultations with the HCCC Board of Directors and Hood Canal education and communication partners the strategy will: 1) define the education and outreach partners, 2) the constituency of support for the integration approach, 3) what the HCCC Board wants from a public involvement process for the integration approach and plan implementation, and 4) what the public should do with the integration approach and ultimate integrated watershed plan.

Initial Phase

In the initial phase, the HCCC will introduce the basic concept and approach of the HCCC integrated watershed plan, including developing a set of desired future conditions. The desired future conditions will be drafted using visioning and citizen values efforts from sources like E3, among others, and will be the starting point for discussions with Hood Canal's communities.

The initial phase is in progress as the plan and process has been introduced at the HCCC annual conference and to the watershed planning groups and HCCC will continue to present to at least the level 1 and 2 audiences.

Several variations of the presentation will be developed that are tailored to the various audiences.

A presentation tool kit will be developed to;

- build awareness of the purpose and need for the integration of Hood Canal activities,(levels 1 and 2)
- familiarize the audience to the assessment process and how the inventory will be compiled into a management plan, (levels 1 and 2)
- provide an example of how plans will be used to develop actions, (level 3 and 4)
- provide evaluation methods to measure the audience's levels of understanding and acceptability of the plan and refine the vision. (levels 3 and 4)

Level 3 audience:

Presentations for Level 3 audiences to community service groups and clubs that represent participants in the social and economic well being of our communities will be scheduled into a monthly/annual meetings and that outreach process will be tailored for a 20-30 minutes timeframe. Addressing the level 3 audiences will begin the dialogue at the local community level about the integration approach and plan development.

¹ ECONET is the Education, Communication and Outreach Network and part of the Puget Sound Partnership's communications and outreach program.

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Feedback information will be collected from the meeting participants by a pre-made form for responses.

Level 4 audience:

To facilitate level 4 public outreach, *Coffee Klatches*² will be conducted in neighborhood homes or local community venues to provide a less formal meeting setting where participants (i.e., landowners, etc.) can share their views and ideas.

Level 4 audiences will be introduced to the integration plan; purpose and goals as provided to level 1, 2 and 3 audiences but these forums main focus will be on the participant's response to three questions; "Why do you like living here?" "What are your concerns about the watershed?" "How do you want the watershed to be in 10 to 20 years from now?" This information will be used in the integration plan for desired conditions.

Intermediate Phase

The Initial Phase information (desired conditions) will be compiled into the integration plan and used to complete the draft integration plan. During the intermediate phase, HCCC and partners will seek input on the integrated plan components. They will provide to the public the assessment documents, inform them of recommended actions developed through these processes (i.e., restoration opportunities, programmatic actions), and collect survey data from them regarding their acceptability of the recommended actions. It is anticipated that a variety of discussion forums will need to be conducted to present the draft plan to date and gather appropriate and relevant input to incorporate into a final plan.

Final Phase

This phase of the public involvement plan will involve implementation of *A Vision for Hood Canal: Hood Canal Integrated Watershed Management Plan*. It will include discussing recommended actions and seeking involvement with the implementation of specific actions. The final phase will be outlined by the final integrated plan, and could include information exchange, volunteer opportunities, etc.

Timeline

Initial Phase: November 2009 through March 2010

- Introduction of integrated plan concept and approach to the level 1 and 2 audiences.

² based on an approach used by the Coos Watershed Association in the development of their watershed plans.

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- Introduction to integration plan concepts and approach to the level 3 and 4 audiences. Relevant feedback will be gathered and incorporated into the integration development process.
- Development of desired future conditions with the level 1, 2, 3 and 4 audiences.

Intermediate Phase: April 2010 through September 2010

- Public review of integrated plan
- Incorporation of public involvement into Integrated Plan

Final Phase: October 2010 through 2013

- Implementation of Integrated plan